

Message Text

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13

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 USIA-12 TRSE-00 MBFR-03

SAJ-01 USPS-02 OC-06 CCO-00 EB-11 RSR-01 /097 W

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R 101625Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1634

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BONN

USNMR SHAPE

USDEL MC

USCINCEUR

CINCUSAFE

CINCUSAREUR

USAFPCS UER/ME RGN R/MAIN AB GER

NATO/SHAPE SPT GP (8) BEL

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 3060

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, MARR, BE, NL

SUBJECT: BELGIAN CUSTOMS TO BE APPLIED TO US APO MAIL AND PARCELS

REF: BRUSSELS 3762

1. SUMMARY: US-GON SOFA ANNEX PROVIDES THAT ANY INSPECTION OF NON-OFFICIAL MAIL IN APO CHANNEL REQUIRED BY GON REGULATIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED BY DUTCH AUTHORITIES "IN ACCORDANCE WITH MUTUALLY DETERMINED PROCEDURES." US HAS NO FORMAL AGREEMENT ON EXCHANGE OF MAIL BETWEEN PTT AND US FORCES, BUT CUSTOMS CONTROL ISSUE HAS NOT RPT NOT ARISEN. DESPITE BELGIUM'S BAD EXAMPLE, WE HOPE GON WILL NOT TRY INTRODUCE CUSTOMS SUPERVISION ON US APO MAIL. END SUMMARY.

2. ON RECEIPT REFTEL WE CONSULTED OUR FILE AND US SOFA. APP-
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LICABLE PROVISION SOFA ANNEX 1 OF AUGUST 13, 1954 IS PARA 7 AND

READS:

"UNITED STATES FORCES MAY, AT THE INSTALLATIONS PUT AT THEIR DISPOSAL, ESTABLISH AND OPERATE UNITED STATES MILITARY POST OFFICES FOR THE HANDLING OF OFFICIAL MAIL AND THAT OF AUTHORIZED INDIVIDUALS BETWEEN THESE AND OTHER UNITED STATES POST OFFICES. THE NETHERLANDS AUTHORITIES WILL NOT INSPECT OFFICIAL MAIL IN UNITED STATES MILITARY POSTAL CHANNELS. ANY INSPECTION OF NON-OFFICIAL MAIL IN SUCH CHANNELS WHICH MAY BE REQUIRED BY REGULATIONS OF THE NETHERLANDS WILL BE CONDUCTED BY NETHERLANDS AUTHORITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH MUTUALLY DETERMINED PROCEDURES.

3. CHECK OF EMBASSY FILES REVEALS NO RPT NO FORMAL AGREEMENTS ON EXCHANGE OF MAIL BETWEEN PTT AND US FORCES. THUS, "MUTUALLY DETERMINED PROCEDURES" MEANS IN EFFECT THAT GON CUSTOMS OFFICIALS DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CONTROL NON-OFFICIAL US MAIL. SHOULD GON ELECT TO FOLLOW BELGIAN EXAMPLE, WE WOULD ENCOUNTER SAME PROBLEMS AS THOSE SPECIFIED IN REFTTEL. ALSO AS IN BELGIUM, WE WOULD HAVE NO IMMEDIATE ALTERNATIVE TO COMPLYING WITH SUCH PROVISIONS IF ENACTED. ISSUE OF CUSTOMS INSPECTION OF APO MAIL HAS NOT ARISEN, HOWEVER, AND WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT DUTCH WILL NOT FOLLOW BELGIAN EXAMPLE.

4. WE SHOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY BRUSSELS' BEST JUDGMENT ON EXACTLY WHY BELGIANS HAVE REVERSED LONG-STANDING POLICY. OBVIOUSLY, WE WISH TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO DETER ANY CONSIDERATION OF RESTRICTING APO OPERATIONS IN THE NETHERLANDS. TANGUY

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